

GridConnections

March 2008

News and Information for the Open Grid Forum Community

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OGF22 Report

1. Tiger Team Stakeholder Analysis and Results

At OGF22, a special town hall meeting was called to present the results of the stakeholder survey undertaken by the board appointed tiger team. The town hall session discussion and stakeholder analysis read-out were further documented in a letter to the OGF community sent earlier this week. The letter is repeated in its entirety below due to its very high level of importance:

From time to time, all organizations need to take stock of their current situation and reevaluate their priorities. As many of you have no doubt noticed, while the OGF community has been relatively stable, and one could argue more productive than ever, some of the primary sponsor organizations have been shifting priorities. This helped motivate your board of directors to task a “tiger team” with answering the following questions:

- *Who are the stakeholders in the OGF, i.e. what is the community?*
- *Why do they build/support/supply Grids?*
- *What are their greatest pain points?*
- *Who do they go to overcome these pain points?*
- *How do our existing efforts map onto the community's priorities?*

We felt that answering questions such as these would help us understand where we are as an organization and where we should be going. The net result of this effort was shared with the community at the second Town Hall meeting at OGF22, but we also wish to inform the entire community through this letter.

The good news is that it is clear that our core community, rooted in eScience and technical computing, is vibrant and healthy. Core attendance and participation in the OGF events and in most chartered groups is stable and has been for some time. A GFSG decision a few years ago

to nurture standards that were felt to be high priorities of the community is bearing fruit, as evidenced by HPC Basic Profile et al. However, we are finding it difficult to continue to attract and retain organizational members and the associated decrease in funding is having a negative impact on our overall financial well being and our ability to continue to support our community activities.

Seeing this trend, a stakeholder survey was commissioned and the results showed that there is a gap in interests between the core working base of our community and our traditional hardware and software platform sponsors. Generally, our core workers look to their own organizations or communities of interest for solutions to their grid challenges. This makes them a less attractive target for vendors wishing to sell their products and services. The survey also indicated that end users do tend to look to vendors for solutions, but that they rarely view OGF as a place to work on their problems.

It is this last point that is the most telling, forcing us to develop our priorities based on the real value being produced within the working core of our community. Specifically, that we are a community that comes together because we share some set of common problems or experiences with respect to grid technologies. We share our experiences to help each other solve our problems. The community is what we are and we welcome all who want to participate, whether they are academics, high performance computing specialists, enterprise end users, platform hardware and software vendors, funding agencies, partner standards organizations and so forth. But the output of the community must be driven by the needs of the community, with prioritization determined by the community.

The survey has also helped us understand many of the existing community's requirements more clearly. As a result, the GFSG has highlighted the standards efforts that are of most important to our community. We intend to help shepherd and nurture the development of those standards and to evangelize the value of the standards we have already created to the broader community, many of whom may be outside of the OGF today but who should find value in our work and who we can encourage to join us and participate. We also need a clear path forward for our non-standards based community activities. As a next step, we expect a group of senior OGF volunteers to add more detail to this in the weeks ahead.

With clear community driven goals we then have the opportunity to restructure to enable maximum success. As a volunteer organization it is imperative that our structure is light-weight, minimizing the effort required to co-ordinate activities, efficient and representative of our community. Returning to the work and priorities of the community is urgent, as is determining a sustainable financial model as sponsor members reduce funding. This means that the community must take more responsibility for its own sustenance. We have three levers that are under our direct control: membership fees, event fees/costs and staffing/organizational costs. We will be examining all of these in the coming weeks and months to arrive at organizational and financial structures that are sustainable. As a first step we have already reduced our staffing by 20%. Additionally, we are increasing the full-week event fees by \$140 per person, starting with OGF23 in Barcelona. We have not taken this step lightly, however we have not increased fees in the last 3 years, even though costs have risen. These two steps will help with our financial well being, without the need to further reduce our staffing and place more of a logistics and administrative burden on our community.

So that is the state of the OGF, your community, your organization. After a period of introspection, we think we have a clearer idea of who we are as a community and our purpose in meeting and working together. As we move forward we need to refine our structure to support our purpose and we need to modify our financial structure to make us more self sustaining and independent. We hope you feel as positive and committed to this organization as we do. Our core community has been stable and productive for a long period of time and these efforts are designed to ensure that this state of affairs continues for the foreseeable future.

Best Regards,

*Paul Strong, Acting Chairman of the Board, OGF
Craig Lee, President, OGF*

2. Keynotes

OGF22 had three fascinating keynotes that covered fundamental topics for grid computing from both technical and business perspectives. Charlie Catlett of Argonne National Lab spoke on "[What OGF Can Do for Enterprises \(A View from the CIO Office\)](#)". As many of you know, Charlie was "in the room" when the term "grid" was coined for an NSF grant proposal to mean a network of machines being managed as a whole. He was also the first president of Global Grid Forum -- which became the Open Grid Forum. Now as the CIO of Argonne National Lab, he described how grids are providing key infrastructure for large-scale scientific inquiry on a production basis. Irving Wladawsky-Berger of IBM and MIT spoke on "[Cloud Computing, Grids and the upcoming Cambrian Explosion in IT](#)". This was a big picture, visionary talk that drew a sharp analogy between the Cambrian Explosion in the number and size of life forms on Earth millions of years ago, with an upcoming "explosion" in the number and size of computing devices, platforms, and systems. One could argue that this explosion has already begun with the connectivity and convergence of computers and networks, large and small, with all manner of cellphones, media, PDAs, etc. Irving theorized that "cloud computing" was perhaps just a flavor of grid computing with a clean, simplified application interface and by hiding complexity, clouds may deliver the mass market. Addison Snell of Tabor Research spoke on "[Grid Usage and Productivity in HPC](#)". He reported on a hard-nose look at the business case for grids undertaken by Tabor Research. This took the form of an extensive, on-going market study on the effectiveness of grids tools, such as Sun Grid Engine, Platform's Load Sharing Facility, and Condor, among others. Quite interestingly, the study revealed that roughly one in five want grid software to be pre-installed in the hardware they buy, an indication that grid computing is maturing and becoming established in the marketplace.

3. Pharma Workshop

The OGF22 pharma/life sciences workshop took place on Wednesday February 27. The main purpose of this workshop was to provide individuals in the pharma, biotech and life sciences industries an opportunity to discuss and understand their grid issues in a forum that included their peers and other grids experts. The workshop consisted of four invited speaker presentations by [Stephen Litster](#), Manager of Advanced Computing Group from Novartis, [Jan Stokes-Rees](#) from Harvard's structural biology department, [Chris Dwan](#) from the Bioteam, and [Vincent Breton](#) who presented on the WISDOM initiative. The presentations were followed by a speaker panel discussion and question and answer session led by Bob Cohen.

The following were key takeaways for the OGF community to further consider and include in their work-plans:

- OGF needs to provide real-world examples that show scientists how things are done. For example, pharma's have federated data problems but they either don't know about OGF or they think its all HPC.
- The OGF community can serve as a central point for codifying data problems

- The pharma industry would benefit from well-written use case documents describing challenges in data management, compute, and scaling applications. The OGF community could serve as a rallying place for these discussions to be held and documents to be published.
- The pharma community would value further networking opportunities where experienced users could report on what actually works and what doesn't on specific issues such as storage issues faced by pharma organizations.
- When addressing pharma end users, the discussion about grids need to be less technology-centered and simplified to express the issues and solutions in an "end-user" language.
- The OGF community should focus more on the application side with applications people within pharma organizations if it wishes to engage the pharma community more effectively.
- Novartis indicated that it has launched a big project this year for authorization and authentication, a topic which the OGF community is working on.
- The grid community should be using key web channels already well known in the pharma industry

4. Financial Services Workshop

The OGF22 financial services workshop took place on Wednesday February 27. The workshop consisted of two sessions, the first from the perspective of the user community and the second from the perspective of the vendor community. The main purpose of this workshop was to provide financial services firms the opportunity to discuss and understand their Grid issues in a forum that includes their peers and other Grids experts. Invited speakers presented within each session followed a brief time for question and answer:

[Grid Computing at The Hartford](#), Robert Nordlund, The Hartford

[Grids in Financial Services](#), Shawn Findlan, West Avenue Management Partners

[Grid Standards and the Finance Industry](#), John Barr, the 451 group

[Enterprise Grid in Financial Services](#), Nick Werstiuk, Platform Computing

[Grid for Financial Services](#), Lee Fisher, HP

[GridServer in Financial Services](#), Gordon Jackson, DataSynapse

[Next Generation Grid: Emerging technologies poised to revolutionize financial markets](#), Kevin Pleiter, IBM

Shawn Findlan posed four key questions for OGF to consider for follow-up and further discussion:

- How do we bring Financial Services to the OGF table?
- What are the benefits?
- How does Financial Services learn from the OGF?
- How does the OGF learn from Financial Services?

5. Additional Reports

A cloud systems Birds-of-a-Feather (BoF), workshops in Data Management and Movement, Enterprise Adoption and geospatial applications (with the Open Geospatial Consortium) were also held at OGF22. Reports on these (and other) activities, outcomes and follow-up plans will be reported in the April GridConnections newsletter as well as posted to the [event content section](#) of the OGF website as soon as they become available.

OGF-Europe Q&A with Silvana Muscella and Steve Crumb

On February 19th, OGF [announced](#) the exciting news of the creation of OGF-Europe, a project funded by the European Commission for Mobilizing and Integrating Communities on Grid Standards & Best Practices Globally. GridConnections spoke with Silvana Muscella, the technical coordinator of OGF-Europe and Director of OGF.eeig and Steve Crumb, OGF-Global Executive Director to get a better sense of how OGF-Europe is being organized and what types of activities are planned as they begin operations.

GridConnections: *Why did OGF initiate the OGF-Europe project?*

Silvana Muscella: OGF-Europe was proposed as an opportunity to capitalise on significant European investments in grid and related technologies over the past 8 -10 years. The lack of open standards in the critical area of middleware is one limiting factor in commercial adoption of grid computing to date. The OGF-Europe project seeks to accelerate standards development and adoption, through a vigorous work plan of providing the mechanisms for achieving near-term solutions to known grid adoption challenges resulting in well-defined best practices and global standards. The ability for standards bodies to act in coordination with market requirements is an important factor in speeding adoption. OGF-Europe will focus on the essence of mobilisation and integration of grid communities with the intent of delivering actionable and sustainable results.

GridConnections: *How is OGF-Europe structured?*

Silvana Muscella: OGF-EUROPE consists of a consortium of nine partners: geographically well distributed over EU27 and all prominent leaders in Grid activities. These organizations have already engaged in outreach to grid user communities, developed middleware, deployed e-Infrastructures, and worked on developing grid standards and best practices. Their expertise will be leveraged to mobilize additional end-user communities, broaden adoption in early adopter sectors, and facilitate a more aggressive path toward grid up-take across Europe.

GridConnections: *How will OGF-Europe and OGF-Global coordinate activities?*

Steve Crumb: OGF-Europe and OGF will coordinate their activities through the “European Chapter of the Open Grid Forum E.E.I.G.” (OGF.eeig, for short) which is a European-based legal entity (specifically, a European Economic Interest Grouping) designed to extend the OGF model to Europe in alignment with OGF’s mission, strategy and leadership to stimulate, coordinate and harmonise networked actions across Europe and globally.

OGF.eeig is governed by an internal regulation natively ensuring synchronisation mechanisms with the OGF and managing structures to execute on expected synergies in Europe. More specifically, OGF.eeig has the mission of: (1) expanding active participation of European public and private individuals and organisations in the work of OGF; (2) channeling European achievements, priorities, requirements and policies into OGF’s global strategy for standardization and grid adoption; (3) delivering global Grid advancements, best practices and specifications to European scientific and commercial entities. According to its Article of Association, OGF.eeig must re-invest all possible profits in the activities of the EEIG specified in the mission summarised above.

GridConnections: *What are the key deliverables of OGF-Europe?*

Silvana Muscella: OGF-Europe, across its 24-month duration, will focus on the achievement of 8 main objectives:

- Provide European structural support to building Open Standards
- Contribute to the OGF Technical Strategy & Roadmap Report covering European perspectives & outcomes
- Document challenges on standardisation with Research & Industry vertical markets through workshops
- Mobilise e-Infrastructure Communities on the business value of Grids & support the take-up of Grid adoption
- Introduce in depth tutorial activities around the Community Outreach Seminars & OGF events in Europe
- Create European surveys on building & operating e-Infrastructures within key European communities

- Deliver two international OGF events organised around Europe providing a platform to exchange knowledge, showcase results, display technological and business demonstrations
- Facilitate the documentation of Grid best practices from European-based R&D & Enterprise-based projects and initiatives which are capitalised for Grid adoption purposes

Major tangible results of OGF-Europe comprise: 3 reports supporting OGF Technical & Strategic Roadmap, 2 survey reports on trends & Grid practices, 4 workshops on challenges on standardisation issues, 4 Grid adoption challenge reports; 6 Community outreach seminars including 4 in-depth tutorials and 6 Community best practice reports. Additionally, 2 OGF-EUROPE international events will be held, including OGF23, hosted by Barcelona Supercomputing Centre & co-located with BEinGRID industry days and OGF25 planned in collaboration with the EGEE User Forum in Spring 2009.

GridConnections: *What activities can we anticipate as the OGF-Europe chapter begins operations?*

Silvana Muscella: The scheduled activities as OGF-Europe unfolds in the first six months (started in February) are the following:

- 1) Monthly eAnnouncements on results of the project posted on the website starting immediately
- 2) Two analysis surveys will be carried out by April to analyse priority issues and to sort them into community practice and/or standardisation tasks. The surveys will be worked in parallel with the GIN and enterprise activities
- 3) A series of 4 concise and focused workshops (the first will be at OGF23) aimed at enhancing the presence and influence of OGF in research and industry vertical end-user markets and corporate data environments.
- 4) Two international events starting with OGF23 in Barcelona 2-6 June 2008. The second event in collaboration with EGEE in Spring 2009
- 5) Community Outreach seminars (the first planned for the Spring in the UK) organized on different topics to educate IT decision makers on the business value of Grids

GridConnections: Is this just a return to the old Grid Forum Europe, which merged with US- and Asia-based Grid Forums in 2001 to form the Global Grid Forum?

Steve Crumb: While on the surface this might appear to be a “back to the future” scenario, in reality it is quite different. First of all, since the late 1990’s, the European Commission and numerous national governments have invested millions of euro to architect, build, and manage grid infrastructures and applications. The OGF-Europe project, while near-term in nature, is specifically aimed at leveraging these investments to increase up-take not just in research but in commercial and small-medium enterprises. As standards development organizations like OGF grow and begin to have a more mature portfolio of standards, it is not uncommon for national or regional chapters to be launched to perform the “last-mile” adoption of those standards in their respective geographies. The launch of the OGF Europe chapter and the OGF-Europe project represents a milestone in the maturity of the grid industry in that adoption globally is dependent upon concerted outreach and adoption efforts within regions or nations. I believe OGF-Europe is uniquely positioned to represent OGF’s global standards and best practices as well as advances in grid technologies and usage to enterprises of all types across Europe.

GridConnections: *What Grid adoption issues will OGF-Europe begin tackling?*

Silvana Muscella: We see the growing demands for analyzing massive data as one of today’s major points of discussion. The Call for Participation for OGF23 sets aside a part of the agenda to cover these issues and may refer to the results in the recommendations reports delivered post event. We hope this type of information will entice user communities such as those using digital repositories to realize the importance of enabling interoperability between providers and this is achieved through the development of best practices and open standards.

OGF23 Call For Participation Now Open

[Session proposals](#) are being accepted through 11 April, 2008 for OGF23, OGF-Europe's first international event, co-hosted by the [Barcelona Supercomputing Center](#) in Barcelona, Spain, June 2-6, 2008. OGF Event Programs seek to strengthen existing industrial and eScience communities within OGF, provide a forum to foster new relationships and collaborations based on common interests, and develop best practices and technical specifications related to distributed systems and grids. With the launch of the EU-funded, [OGF-Europe](#) project, topic-specific community outreach seminars emphasizing best practices, workshops analyzing grid user requirements, and tutorials transferring practical skills will take place as part of this event. Additionally, the [BEinGRID](#) project will co-locate its Industry Days event where updates and demonstrations of eighteen business experiments with grids will be presented. The Program Committee is soliciting proposals for content related to the following topics:

- OGF's chartered groups and Birds of a Feather (BoF) sessions
- OGF Specification Adoption
- Digital Repositories
- Data Management in a Grid Environment
- Best/Community Practices
- Grid Tutorials
- Community sessions on a variety of technical topics

The Call for Participation [submission](#) deadline is 11 April, 2008. Notifications will be sent by 21 April, 2008.

Additional OGF23 Information

Barcelona, Spain

June 2-6, 2008

[Registration](#)

[Barcelo Sants Hotel Room Reservations](#)

[Call For Participation](#)

[Sponsorship and Exhibition Information](#)

[Chair Information](#)

[Local Information](#)

Documents Update

Recently Published Recommendations

The following documents were published in February. Congratulations to all the authors and working group members involved in getting this important work accomplished!

DOCUMENT	TITLE	TYPE	AUTHORS	AREA
GFD.124	Interoperability Experiences with the High Performance Computing Basic Profile (HPCBP), Version 1.0	Experimental	G. Wasson	Compute
GFD.123	Defining the Grid: A Roadmap for OGSA® Standards v1.1 [Obsoletes GFD.52]	Informational	C. Jordan, H. Kishimoto	Architecture

Documents in Public Comment

Prior to formally publishing a document, OGF solicits “public comments” from the greater grid community, which is an important step in the OGF document process. The following documents are currently available for public comment. Please take a moment to provide your feedback.

- [Job Submission Description Language \(JSDL\) Specification, Version 1.0 \(Errata draft 020\)](#)
- [Secure Addressing Profile 1.0](#)
- [Secure Communication Profile 1.0](#)
- [HPC File Staging Profile, Version 1.0](#)
- [OGSA® Basic Security Profile 2.0](#)
- [OGSA-DMI Functional Specification 1.0](#)

Call For Submissions for OGF Special Journal Issue

[Submissions](#) are being sought for the Special Journal Issue of Concurrency and Computation: Practice and Experience for the Open Grid Forum. The deadline to submit is March 15.

OGF In the News

InformationWeek published an excellent [article](#) about eBay’s major three-year grid computing initiative. The article provides an excellent grid data center case study and in it Paul Strong, eBay distinguished research scientist and acting OGF board chairman, talks about OGF and the activities of the Reference Model working group.

Upcoming Events

- **OGF23 Co-located with the BEinGRID Industry Event Barcelona, Spain June 2-6, 2008**
- **OGF24 Co-located with GridAsia08 Singapore September 15-19, 2008**

Other Events

- **INGRID 2008 Lacco Ameno, Island of Ischia, Italy April 9-11, 2008**
3rd International Workshop on Distributed Cooperative Laboratories:
Instrumenting the Grid

Newsletter Contributors Needed

The purpose of the OGF GridConnections newsletter is to inform and educate the greater grid community about our activities and accomplishments. If you have any news you would like to submit for the newsletter, please do not hesitate to do so. You, our members, drive all of the significant events, activities and accomplishments of our community and we would love to hear from you. Just send an email to the [GridConnections editor](#). We welcome your input!

Please Renew your OGF Membership For 2008

Please remember to renew your 2008 OGF membership. We made great progress in 2007 and we need your continued support to build on that momentum. We also ask all organizations that are in the Grid community who are not currently members to join us in 2008. Memberships start for as little as \$10,000 (\$5,000 for eligible non-profits). You may contact [Steve Crumb](#) or visit the [membership](#) portion of our website for more information. Thanks!